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SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/RD/SCA, DS/DSS/ITA, CA AND SA/INS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY COLOMBO EAC MEETING JUNE 17, 2009 REF
TRAVEL WARNING

¶1. (SBU) Summary: AmEmbassy Colombo convened an Emergency Action Committee (EAC) meeting on June 17, 2009. The EAC discussed post's Official Travel Policy and the necessity to update the Country Specific Information and the Travel Warning in light of the current security situation in Sri Lanka as a result of the Government of Sri Lanka's (GSL) declared defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE, or Tamil Tigers). The EAC discussed amending the official Travel Policy and lifting the current ban on travel by public transportation (buses and trains). EAC also discussed amendments to the Restricted Travel Policy, but decided in favor of keeping the policy as is, until the security situation stabilizes and the GSL decreases its intense security measures. The EAC concurred on amendments to both the Consular Information Sheet and the Consular Travel Warning. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) On June 17, 2009, AmEmbassy Colombo convened an EAC meeting. Present for the meeting were Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, Regional Security Officer, Regional Affairs Officer, Political Officer, Economic Officer, Management Officer, Consular Officer, Public Affairs Officer, USAID Director, Defense Attache', Office of Defense Cooperation Chief, Marine Security Guard Detachment Commander, International Broadcasting Bureau Station Chief, Community Liaison Officer, and Medical Officer. The agenda items for the meeting were:

-- Amending to the Restricted Travel Policy

-- Revising the Travel Warning and Country Specific Information Sheet

¶3. (SBU) The EAC agreed that it is too soon (only one month) after the GSL's victory over the LTTE to change the current policy. The EAC agreed that revisions might be warranted if the security situation stabilizes, and when or if the GSL eases the heavy security presence and allows more freedom of movement throughout the country. However, the EAC agreed to recommend lifting the ban on the traveling on trains for personal reasons, while maintaining the ban on travel of public buses due to the history and more recent events of bombings and suicide attacks associated with buses and bus stations.

¶4. (SBU) The EAC agreed on proposed revisions to the Travel Warning and Country Specific Information Sheet (CIS), for approval by the Charge d'Affaires, A/DCM, RSO, CONS, POL, and ECON sections. CONS advised the EAC that Amcits of Sri Lankan heritage might encounter difficulties if they travel to Sri Lanka. For example, the GSL has detained nationals of other Western nations with dual Sri Lankan citizenship and has even sent them to Internally Displaced Persons camps in the North, while denying consular access to them. Therefore, post's Travel Warning and CIS will continue to advise Amcits of Sri Lankan origins of the risks involved in traveling to the country.

15. (U) Post will continue to monitor the security situation and will report further developments, if any, septel. POC for this message is RSO Michael V. Perkins, who may be contacted at 94.11.249.8885, 94.11.249.8888 (MSG Post 1 after regular business hours), or via the classified and unclassified email systems.
MOORE